

Minutes of SHUG executive committee meeting of February 7, 2003.

The Executive Committee convened by conference call at 1:00 PM EDT on February 7, 2003. 10 of the 11 members were present. The members in attendance were:

Paul Butler
Zema Chowdhuri
Takeshi Egami (Chair)
Christina Hoffmann
Joanna Krueger
Scott Mixture
Nancy Ross
John Tranquada
David Vaknin
Angus Wilkinson

This being the first meeting of the committee with the newly elected members, the meeting began with each member introducing themselves to the group. Following this, the business of selecting a Vice-chair (and chair elect) and Secretary was addressed. Takeshi pointed out that according to the bylaws, the vice chair should be elected from the new members and that no ORNL employee is eligible to be either chair or vice-chair. Thus, excepting the postdoc member, only Nancy Ross, Joanna Krueger, and Paul Sokol are eligible. Furthermore, Takeshi noted that he will be leaving the university of Pennsylvania for a joint appointment at UT and ORNL in the summer, so that the vice-chair will be taking over in mid-year and serve one and a half years as chair making this a particularly important choice. Takeshi suggested that the three eligible candidates all be nominated and that election be via email to Paul Butler. There being no objection, Takeshi next suggested that Paul Butler be nominated to continue as Secretary and asked for any other nominations. There being none, Paul Butler was appointed Secretary for 2003.

Takeshi then indicated that he had invited Jim Roberto to address the committee at the next meeting. In the meantime Takeshi briefed the group on the state of HFIR, noting the progress on the various instrument fronts (one fully operational triple axis and two others getting close). The reactor however did not come up as scheduled for the latest cycle, which was to have been the first cycle with user proposal beam time allocations (the start of the user program). He indicated that no technical problems exist at this time, but that HFIR is undergoing DOE review and awaiting signature for restart. If all goes well, the reactor could be back up in a few weeks though at this point that is not guaranteed.

SNS is progressing well also, though a problem at Los Alamos with work on the Linac caused a several month delay. The problem is fixed, but it now appears that the early finish of late 2005 that had been hoped for will no longer be possible. SNS will come online in early 2006 as originally scheduled. The construction is on the order of 70% complete with the foundation and concrete framework for several floors of the CLO (central lab and office building) already up.

The CNMS (center for nanophase material science) building is believed to be on hold pending a final budget for FY- 2003.

Next Takeshi informed the group that Jim Roberto would like SHUG to sample the community's view on the success of the initial user program. Obviously this would not be until sometime mid year. However, Takeshi suggested this might ideally be something for the HFIR special committee which so far has never been activated. The bylaws requiring the two special committees of HFIR and SNS anyway, Takshi asked Paul Butler for the names of the members on each sub committee from last year. These are:

for SNS

Robert McQueeney, Chair (no longer member)

Meigan Aronson (no longer member)

Paul Butler

Takeshi Egami

Scott Mixture

John Tranquada

David Vaknin

Angus Wilkonson

for HFIR

Costas Stassis, chair (no longer member)

David Belanger (no longer member)

Paul Butler

Takeshi Egami

Andrei Zheludev (no longer member)

the new members were asked to think about which committee they might serve on, and in particular, consider serving on the HFIR committee as it is particularly lacking members (and may have the first task to deal with). No new members for the SNS committee immediately came forth. For the HFIR committee David Vaknin, Joanna Krueger, and Nancy Ross agreed to join and David was elected chair. The remaining new members will choose at a later date. The selection of the new chair of the SNS committee is likewise postponed.

Last year saw much discussion of "fast access" with two different varieties being identified. The "hot topic" version is already addressed in the SNS white paper. Angus Wilkinson had accepted at the last meeting of last year to prepare a proposal for using the powder machine at HFIR as a test of the "short duration" experiment model. Takeshi asked Angus to brief us on his progress. Angus indicated he had contacted Bryan Chakoumakos, the powder diffractometer instrument scientist, had received good positive feedback, and was in the process of writing something up.

A brief discussion of how to increase the user base occurred next. The question of how to bring new practitioners into the community was raised. It was noted that workshops and "schools" (such as the JINS workshops in Oak Ridge or the summer schools sponsored by the various neutron sources) are very useful in this regard. It was agreed that we should remain on the lookout for opportunities in this area.

Takeshi indicated that while most of our work would be done via conference calling and emails, we were planning one face to face meeting in Oak Ridge. A discussion about appropriate times ensued with a clear interest in making it after the end of semester (late May early June). A question arose about other meetings taking place in Knoxville with which such a visit could be combined, but the NICEST workshop is too soon (March 12) and the next one appears to be in the fall. A suggestion was made to get together then, but it was agreed that sooner would be best. It was decided that people would check their schedules and come back later to choose a time in the end of May early June time frame.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:45PM EDT

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Butler
SHUG Secretary

Note 1: Angus distributed a copy of the writeup for a proposed “short duration” fast access to the group via email after the meeting.

Note 2: In subsequent balloting, Joanna Krueger was elected vice chair.